THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF SCOTLAND

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THE NATIONAL GALLERY
OF
SCOTLAND

FIFTY-SIX PHOTOGRAVURES OF
THE CHIEF PICTURES

WITH A DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL
ACCOUNT OF THE COLLECTION

BY

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EDINBURGH

THE GETTY CENTER
LIBRARY

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

Although it is little more than fifty years since the National Gallery of Scotland was first opened to the public, the history of the formation of the collections then brought together for permanent exhibition goes much farther back. In 1819 a number of the more public spirited of the art-lovers in Scotland formed themselves into a body, subsequently known as the Royal Institution, with the intention of organising loan collections of paintings by ancient masters, which would exert an educative influence upon the public, and the small group of artists then emerging in Scotland, almost all of whom were resident in Edinburgh. But the "Old Masters" did not prove a financial success, and in 1821 the Directors made overtures to the local artists with a view to obtaining their support in reviving exhibitions of contemporary work. From 1808 to 1813 a series of Art Exhibitions had been conducted with conspicuous success by a Society of Artists, but in the latter year the needs of a majority of its members had tempted them to divide the accumulated profits, amounting to £1800, and dissolve the Society. The minority, which included the abler members, carried on the exhibitions for three years longer before abandoning them. Approached by the Institution, these artists now agreed to co-operate upon the understanding that any surplus accruing should be set aside for the benefit of artists and their families; but their total exclusion from any part in the management resulted in friction, and eventually resulted (1826) in the formation of the Scottish Academy. A small body at first, the Academy secured and retained public sympathy, and when, in 1829,

the artist-associates of the Institution seceded in a body and joined the opposition, the Institution abandoned both modern and old exhibitions, the latter of which had been infrequent, and turned their attention to the acquisition of "ancient pictures as a nucleus of a national collection." In carrying out this new project they had the benefit of the advice of Andrew Wilson (1780-1848), a cultured Scottish artist resident in Italy, and by 1860, when their activity may be said to have ceased, the Institution owned about sixty pictures. A number of these were of minor importance and several were of doubtful authenticity and were subsequently withdrawn from exhibition, but there was a fair proportion of fine things, amongst them the three great Van Dycks, which were purchased, and the famous "Tiepolo" and others, which had been gifted by members. As regards the pictures purchased, however, the artists asserted that they had been bought to a great extent from profits made at the modern exhibitions; but no steps were taken to enforce this claim, and in 1858 they were transferred formally to the Gallery by the Institution.

Stimulated by the Institution's example perhaps, the Academy, which obtained a Royal Charter in 1838, also set about forming a collection. To some extent the pictures they acquired were by Old Masters—Bassano's "Adoration of the Magi" was purchased at Lord Eldin's sale in 1856; but modern work naturally claimed their chief interest, and their earliest notable purchases (1829) were the series of great canvases by William Etty.

Some years later, in 1845, the bequest to the University of Edinburgh by Sir James Erskine of Torrie of his fine cabinet of pictures, principally of the Dutch school, brought the question of a national art collection for Scotland definitely into the arena of public discussion. Sir James had made public exhibition a condition of his

bequest, and, by arrangement between the University and the Board of Manufactures, it was proposed to secure this in the Royal Institution building, which had been erected upon the Mound by the Board in 1823 at a cost of £47,000. Hitherto that building had afforded accommodation for the Board's School of Art—the famous Trustees' Academy in which so many good Scottish artists were trained—for the collection of the Institution and, since 1836, for the annual exhibitions of the Royal Scottish Academy. Now, however, in order to conform to the stipulations of the Torrie Bequest, it was proposed to exclude the Academy. This, had it been carried out, would have been a staggering blow to the living art of Scotland—the dead hand of the past would have lain heavily upon the pulsing heart of the present. But the Academy protested to such purpose that, after an inquiry conducted by Sir John Shaw Lefevre, the government of the day decided that the time had come when a national collection ought to be formed by bringing together the separate collections already existing—that of the Royal Institution, that of the Academy and the Torrie Bequest—and that a suitable building should be erected to accommodate it and the Academy's annual exhibitions. All the parties interested agreeing, and the city having granted at a nominal price the very valuable site on the Mound immediately to the south of the Royal Institution, the building, which until this year (1911) housed both the National Gallery and the Academy, was erected from designs by W. H. Playfair. The foundation stone was laid by the Prince Consort on 30th August 1850; but, while the Academy held its first exhibition in its new rooms in 1855, it was not until four years later that the National Gallery was completed and opened to the public.

Gratifying as this result must have been to those concerned, and marking a great step forward, as it indubitably did, the provision made

by Government was much less generous than it seemed. For of the £53,500, which the building and site cost, the Board of Manufactures were made to pay £23,500 from the purely Scottish monies in their hands; and, what was worse, the Treasury threw the whole burden of maintenance and staffing upon the Union Annuity, administered by the Board, and provided no grant whatever for the extension of the collection. Despite occasional protests, these conditions were maintained until 1902, and in the interval, for services which in England and Ireland were provided by the State, Scotland had paid nearly £50,000. Any one, with the least idea of what the prices of pictures now are, compared with what they were during three-quarters of that period, can easily imagine what the Scottish National Collection might have been, if it had been treated, not with generosity even, but with bare justice at its inception.

Notwithstanding these disadvantageous circumstances, the Gallery grew gradually in importance. If the gifts it received were not great in numbers, many of the pictures were of exceptionally fine quality. One of the earliest was in some respects the most important, for Lady Murray's bequest (1861) included the group of French pictures of the eighteenth century, collected by Allan Ramsay (1713-1784), the artist, which, with a few works of the same school acquired more recently, now forms one of the distinctive features of the collection. No other private gift made to the gallery, except the Vaughan collection of thirty-eight Turner drawings bequeathed in 1900, equals it in magnitude, for, unlike the Glasgow Gallery, which owes so much to the generosity of citizens, who have bequeathed, or gifted to it in their life-time, valuable collections—one recalls the M'Lellan, Reid, Donald, and Alston benefactions—the National Gallery of Scotland has received no great numerical addition from any Scottish collector. Yet one remembers,

with scarcely less pleasure, the presentation or bequest of one or two pictures of importance, and, while it would be invidious to single out special names, Mr Graham of Redgorton's bequest of Gainsborough's "Hon. Mrs Graham," and Mr William M'Ewan's gift of two splendid pictures by Hals, followed by Rembrandt's "Hendrikje Stoffels," can scarcely remain unmentioned. Moreover, the aggregate of these gifts is considerable in number as well as excellent in quality. In 1907, when new conditions came into play, of the five hundred works on view (excluding diplomas) only seventeen had been purchased by the Board. The rest had been presented or were on permanent loan. Amongst the former were the twenty-one works by Scottish artists, which had been acquired by the Royal Association for Promotion of the Fine Arts in Scotland during its career.

Placed in the keepership of W. B. Johnstone, R.S.A., an artist of scholarly attainments, who had as successors Sir W. Fettes Douglas, an accomplished antiquary and a fine artist, who was subsequently President of the Academy, and Gourlay Steell, R.S.A., Her Majesty's Animal Painter for Scotland, the collection grew and was as well shown and cared for as space and circumstances would permit. It was not, however, until the appointment of Mr Robert Gibb, R.S.A. (now His Majesty's Limner for Scotland), as keeper in 1895—resigned 1907—that it was handled in a manner worthy of its importance. Acting in conjunction with a Committee of the Board, he had the less important and more doubtful works removed from the walls, and the condition of the pictures seen to; and then, after the rooms had been improved and redecorated, the collection was rearranged in a manner which did it justice, and a new catalogue was prepared.

The increased importance of the collection in public estimation, which followed these changes, and the feeling which had grown up that

its development was hampered, not only by want of a purchasing fund, but by lack of space to expand, led to the question of its proper maintenance being raised in Parliament by Sir John Stirling Maxwell and other Scottish members in 1901. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was obdurate, but finally consented to the matter being inquired into, and, in September 1902, the Secretary for Scotland, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, appointed a Departmental Committee to investigate the whole situation. Involving not only the National Gallery and the Royal Scottish Academy, but, almost as directly, the National Portrait Gallery, the School of Art, and the Royal Society of Edinburgh, this proved much more complicated and difficult than any but those behind the scenes had anticipated. After careful consideration, the Committee reported that both the National and National Portrait Galleries were inadequately maintained and ought to be given grants for purchase; that a new National Gallery ought to be built, and the Academy given the tenancy of the whole existing building; and that a new School of Art was urgently required. Other recommendations, with which we are not concerned here, were made regarding the Royal Society, and the National Museum of Antiquities. It was a considerable proposition, and two Scottish secretaries in succession to Lord Balfour had held office before the matter, which those interested had never allowed to rest, was taken up seriously by Lord Pentland, who found an adequate, if less ambitious, solution for all the questions involved. In so far as affected the National Gallery, the issue was that the Academy was to be transferred to the building formerly known as the Royal Institution, and that the whole of the existing building was to be devoted to the National Collection. To enable these changes to be carried out the National Galleries of Scotland Bill (1906), previously prepared by Lord Dunedin, was passed. Under that the Honourable the Board of Manufactures,

which had been called into existence in 1727 to administer the Union Annuity granted to Scotland, as an equivalent for extra taxation, came to an end. At first devoted to fostering manufactures and fisheries, the functions of that Board had gradually been modified under social changes, and since 1760, when they had founded the School of Design, which ultimately developed into the Trustees' Academy, their chief business had been more or less connected with the arts. These circumstances had resulted in their becoming custodians of the National Gallery and of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, which had been gifted to the nation by the late Mr J. R. Findlay, a member of the Board, as well as of the School of Art; but, under the changed conditions, it was considered desirable to appoint a new and much smaller Board of Trustees, whose sole concern would be the development of the galleries. The number of members was fixed at seven, and Sir T. D. Gibson-Carmichael (who was succeeded by Mr David Erskine of Linlathen when the former became Governor of Victoria) was appointed chairman.

Under this new Board many changes have been made. The Royal Scottish Academy, which owed much to its President, Sir James Guthrie, throughout the long and delicate negotiations involved, have been splendidly housed in the building in part of which their early exhibitions were held, and, now that they are settled in their new home, the National Gallery is being reconstructed to meet the needs of the present, and the growth which it is hoped will follow in the near future. These alterations, which have been designed by Mr W. T. Oldrieve, of H.M. Office of Works, and will cost about £11,000, will double the accommodation on the main floor and add several smaller rooms in the front of the building.

Since the new Board came into existence considerable progress has also been made in widening the scope and increasing the interest of the

Gallery. During these four years and a half, excluding the Academy's collection referred to below and a few fine things obtained on loan, fifty-six works have been added, and, owing to the increased resources now at the disposal of the Board, forty-two of them have been bought. But they have not been treated as if acquired for Edinburgh alone. Realising their responsibilities to the country as a whole, the Trustees have inaugurated a system under which recent acquisitions, whether by gift or purchase, are sent on loan to the galleries in Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen. In this way other centres share in any addition now made to the National Gallery of Scotland.

In recognition of the increased and finer accommodation provided by Government for the Academy, that body in 1910 transferred to the nation the large collection, which they had lent for so long to the Gallery, and have contributed further works previously in their private rooms. Amongst the latter are the drawings, chiefly by Old Masters, collected by David Laing, LL.D., the antiquary, and bequeathed by him to the Academy. From these, from the omnium gatherum made by the late W. F. Watson, who left it to the old Board many years ago, and from the drawings in the Murray Bequest, it is intended to select the nucleus of a collection of original work in black and white, in which will be included engravings and etchings by such masters as Dürer, Aldegrever, Beham, Rembrandt, Wilkie, Geddes, Méryon, Whistler and Haden, in part presented and in part purchased by the Trustees.

Under this new arrangement the Diploma collection of the Academy, which, for many years, was shown in two rooms of the National Gallery, and served, though too many Academicians had given works not of their best, to supplement that collection in some respects, has been withdrawn and is to be exhibited, during the period of the year the galleries are not required for the Academy's exhibition, in

rooms at the south end of the new Royal Scottish Academy. There this collection will be associated with that which the Scottish Modern Arts Association is forming. Founded in 1907, largely on the initiative of Mr Stodart Walker, with the intention of getting together a collection of works by contemporary Scottish artists—though not excluding those of other schools—that Society has, in the few years of its existence, done excellent work. Its collection, like all others, is not above criticism; but in the main it has been well chosen, and given support and opportunity—the National Gallery being devoted to the work of deceased artists—it might develop into a Scottish Luxembourg.

Formed in the beginning from collections made by separate institutions or by individuals, added to chiefly by bequest or gift, and, until recently, without a purchasing fund from which blanks might have been filled to make it more generally representative, the collection in the National Gallery of Scotland has been brought together on no definite plan. Yet, although not numerically important when compared with the great galleries, it contains a large number of first class or interesting works. Several of the few primitive pictures are admirable examples of their respective schools, and the Italian section, if small, includes a number of very notable things, amongst them Michel Angelo's wax models for the Medici statues and the Madonna in San Lorenzo, Rosselli's "St Catherine of Siena," Bassano's masterpiece, "The Adoration of the Magi," Veronese's "Mars and Venus," and Tiepolo's "Finding of Moses." The great painters of Flanders and Holland are more numerously represented, and, for the most part, by exceptionally fine examples. Hals's "A Dutch Gentleman" and "A Dutch Lady" are amongst the greatest products of his middle period; the Rembrandt, "Hendrikje Stoffels," is a noble example of that artist's strength and subtlety in portraiture, and the little moun-

tain "Landscape," whether by him or by Hercules Segers, as has been suggested, is pregnant with imaginative apprehension of the familiar; Ruisdael's very impressive "Banks of a River" is probably his greatest work; Kalf's "Still Life," and De Witte's "Interior of Amsterdam Cathedral" are masterpieces of their respective kinds. And amongst Van Dycks there are none more distinguished than the trio which came from the Institution's collection. Moreover, the group of French eighteenth-century pictures, which will soon be reinforced by some fine drawings of the same period, would be notable anywhere.

Turning to the English school there are that *chef-d'œuvre* of Gainsborough, "The Hon. Mrs Graham"; the most ambitious historical works of William Etty; and fine examples of the landscape of Richard Wilson, John Crome, and J. S. Cotman, while Turner, if regretfully unrepresented by an oil picture, can be studied in the noble series of water-colours bequeathed by Mr Vaughan.

The largest and not the least interesting part of the collection, however, is devoted to the work of Scottish artists. And, one of the chief functions of a National Gallery being the illustration of the development of the national school, this is as it should be. For over a century Scotland has been producing a succession of painters, whose achievement possesses characteristics and qualities which give it a distinctive place in the history of modern painting, and in the Mound Gallery most of the chief figures in the school are represented by pictures which show their art at its best. George Jamesone, W. G. Ferguson, Allan Ramsay, whose drawings will be a feature of the new black and white section, the Runcimans and a few more of the precursors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are seen in exceptionally fine specimens; the masterly and convincing art of Raeburn is shown in a remarkable series of portraits, which reveals the range of his

accomplishment and includes several of his most famous works; and of Wilkie and his contemporaries in genre and portraiture, amongst whom Andrew Geddes and Thomas Duncan are conspicuous, and of the earlier Scottish landscape painters, notably the Rev. John Thomson of Duddingston, William Simson, and Horatio M'Culloch, there are admirable examples. If William Dyce's pre-Raphaelite phase is unrepresented, two or three canvases show his ability in other directions, and by that isolated genius David Scott there are several pictures instinct with his strong imaginative grasp and his great gifts as a colourist and designer. Harvey, Phillip, Fettes Douglas, and Noël Paton are represented by pictures which are considered their very best, but their contemporaries in landscape, Bough, Fraser, and Wintour, have unfortunately not yet had justice done to their claims. The later phases of the Scottish school are, of course, less fully shown, but Scott Lauder's method is exemplified in one or two characteristic works, and gradually representative pictures by the chief of the remarkable group of artists trained by him, and by those of a later generation who are dead, are finding places on the walls.

As regards the future the policy to be pursued by the Trustees in developing the collection was outlined in a report, which was communicated to the press soon after the new Board was appointed. In that document it was pointed out that the time when blanks in the representation of the greater of the Old Masters could have been filled at moderate prices was over, and that most additions of that kind must come, as in the past, from the generosity of private donors. "The resources at the disposal of the Trustees being limited," the report proceeds, "your Committee believes that the ideal to be aimed at in connection with the Foreign and English sections is that of collecting examples of the more individual men or characteristic phases in each

of the important schools rather than the attempt to form a large general collection illustrative of the history of painting in all countries. As regards the Scottish section, on the other hand, an endeavour might be made with hope of success to bring together a collection so fully representative as to present an adequate survey of Scottish painting in its historical development. In this also, however, it would be well to place quality before quantity, and to have an artist represented by one or two highly characteristic works rather than by a larger number of less admirable examples."

James L. Caw.

National Gallery of Scotland,
Edinburgh.

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MADONNA AND CHILD

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ST JOHN, WITH THE DONOR AND HIS SONS
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Panel, each $23'' \times 10''$, *purchased* 1910

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Panel $21'' \times 16\frac{1}{2}''$, *bequeathed by Mary, Lady Ruthven*, 1885

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BY JACOB ISSACKSY VAN RUISDAEL

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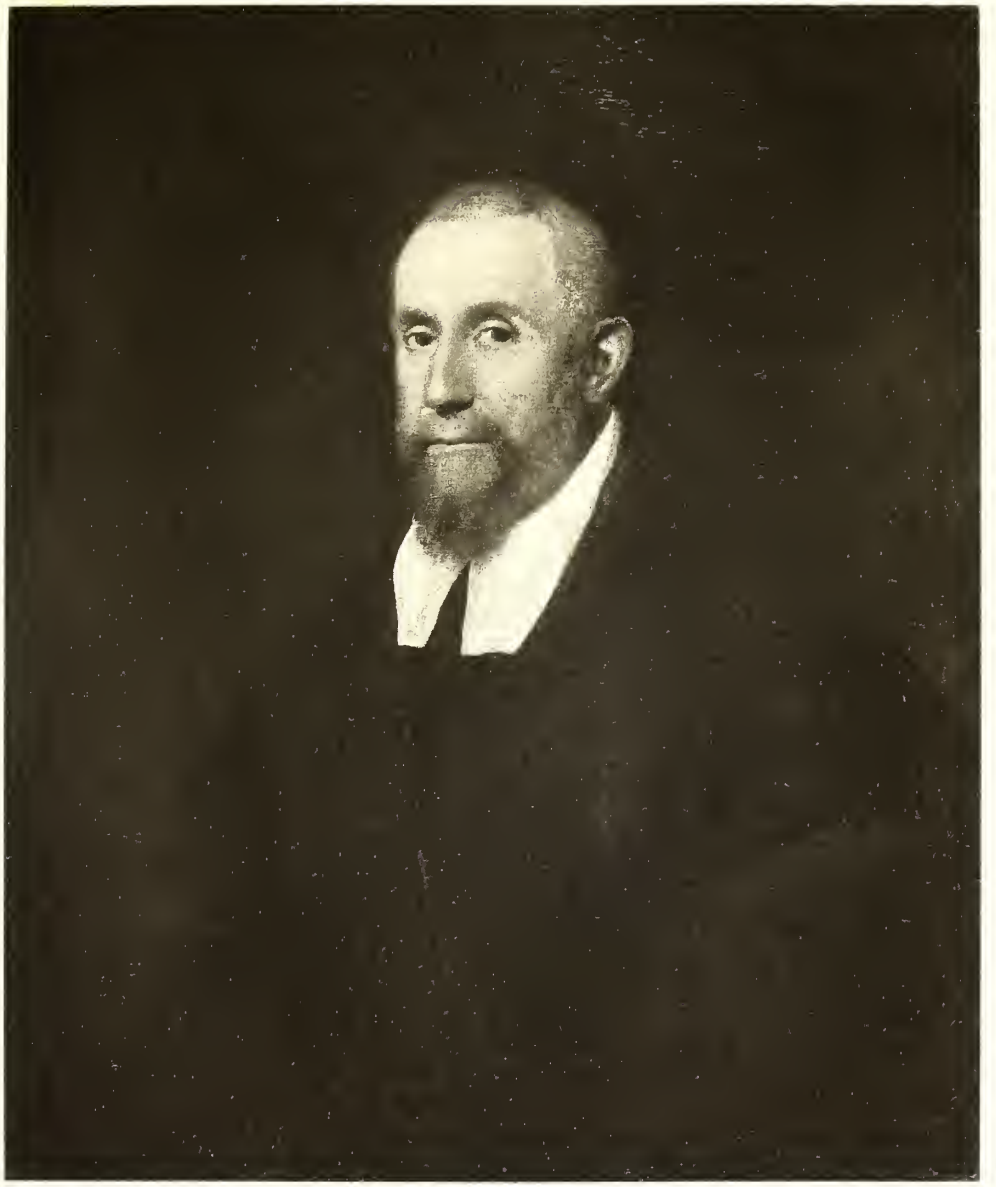

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Canvas 46″ × 34″, *presented by Mr William M'Ewan, LL.D.*, 1885

BOATS IN A CALM

BY WILLEM VAN DE VELDE, THE YOUNGER

Canvas $22\frac{1}{2}'' \times 17''$, *Torrie Collection*

HALT AT AN ITALIAN WINE-HOUSE DOOR

BY KAREL DU JARDIN

Canvas 35″ × 32″, Torrie Collection

STILL LIFE

BY WILLEM KALF

Canvas 24″ × 20″, *purchased* 1909

INTERIOR OF AMSTERDAM CATHEDRAL

BY E. DE WITTE

Canvas $76\frac{1}{2}'' \times 65\frac{1}{2}''$, *purchased* 1909

MARTYRDOM OF ST SEBASTIAN

BY SIR ANTONY VAN DYCK

Canvas 90″ × 64″, *presented by the Royal Institution*

THE LOMELLINI FAMILY

BY SIR ANTONY VAN DYCK

Canvas 106″ × 99″, *presented by the Royal Institution*

DUTCH BOORS DRINKING

BY DAVID TENIERS

Panel 15″ × 11″, *purchased* 1891

LANDSCAPE—THE FISHERMEN AND ANGLER

BY CLAUDE GELLÉE

Canvas $30\frac{1}{2}'' \times 25''$, *purchased* 1908

FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE

BY ANTOINE WATTEAU

Canvas 22″ × 18″, *bequeathed by Lady Murray*, 1861

FRENCH PASTORAL

BY ANTOINE WATTEAU

Canvas 10″ × 8″, *presented by Mrs Williams*, 1866

MADAME DE POMPADOUR

BY FRANÇOIS BOUCHER

Canvas 18″ × 15″, *bequeathed by Lady Murray*, 1861

LADIES BATHING

BY JEAN BAPTISTE JOSEPH PATER

Canvas 28″ × 23″, *bequeathed by Lady Murray*, 1861

BOY WITH LESSON-BOOK

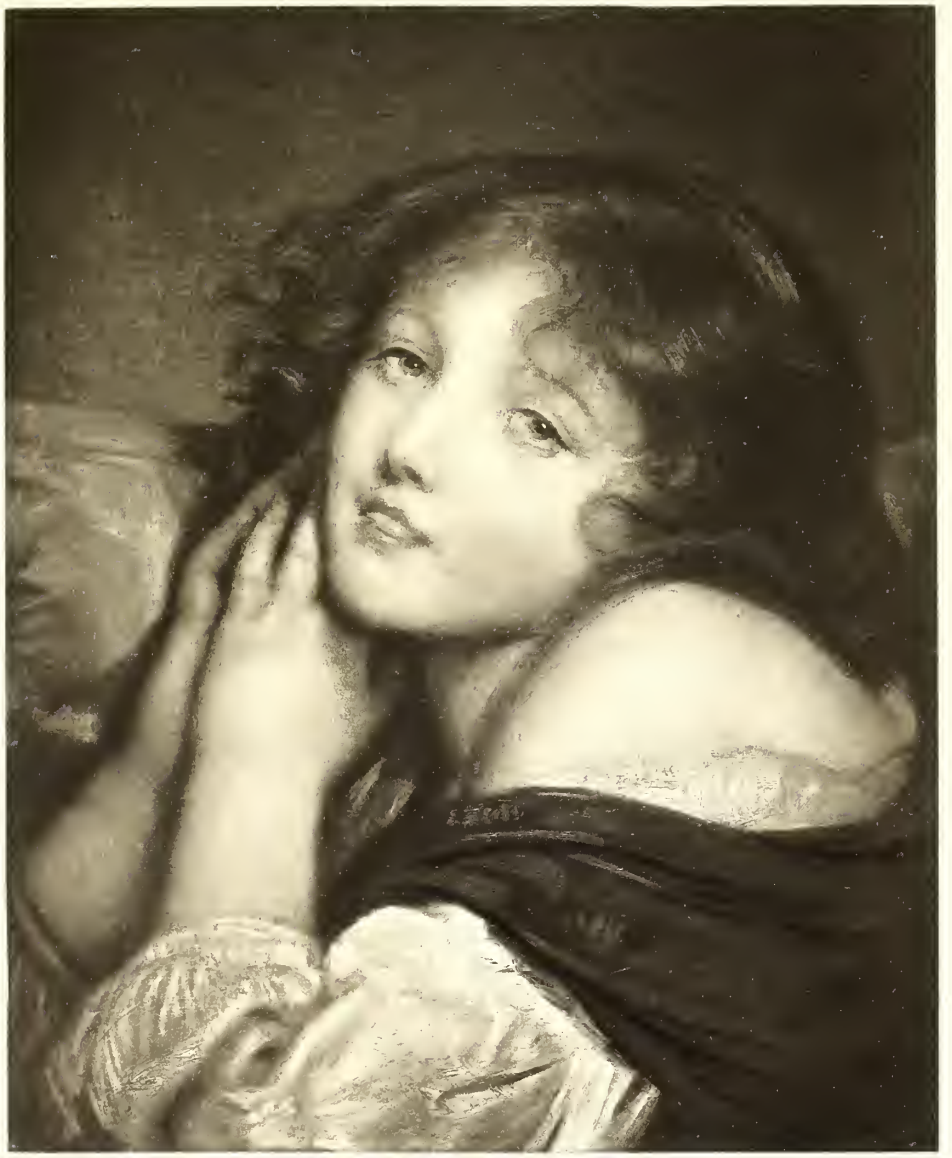
BY JEAN BAPTISTE GREUZE

Canvas 25″ × 19″, *bequeathed by Lady Murray*, 1861

GIRL WITH FOLDED HANDS

BY JEAN BAPTISTE GREUZE

Canvas 18″ × 15″, *bequeathed by Lady Murray*, 1861



LA FÊTE

BY ADOLPHE MONTICELLI

Panel 23″ × 15″, *purchased* 1911

THE HON. MRS GRAHAM

BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, R.A.

Canvas 93″ × 60″, *bequeathed by Mr Robert Graham*, 1858

RIVER SCENE WITH FIGURES

BY RICHARD WILSON

Canvas 50″ × 34″, bequeathed by Mrs Mary Veitch to R.S.A.: presented by the Royal Scottish Academy

SCENE IN WALES

BY JOHN CROME

Canvas 30″ × 24″, *purchased* 1907

BUILDINGS ON A RIVER

BY JOHN SELL COTMAN

Canvas 14½″ × 12½″, *presented by the National Art Collections Fund*, 1905

FALLS OF CLYDE

BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

Paper $20\frac{1}{2}'' \times 16\frac{1}{4}''$. *bequeathed by Mr Henry Vaughan*, 1900

HEIDELBERG

BY J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

Paper $21\frac{3}{4}'' \times 14\frac{3}{4}''$, *bequeathed by Mr Henry Vaughan*, 1900

THE COMBAT

BY WILLIAM ETTY, R.A.

Canvas 135″ × 100″, *presented by the Royal Scottish Academy*

COUNTESS MARISCHAL

BY GEORGE JAMESONE

Canvas 27″ × 21½″, *purchased* 1908

MRS BRUCE OF ARNOT

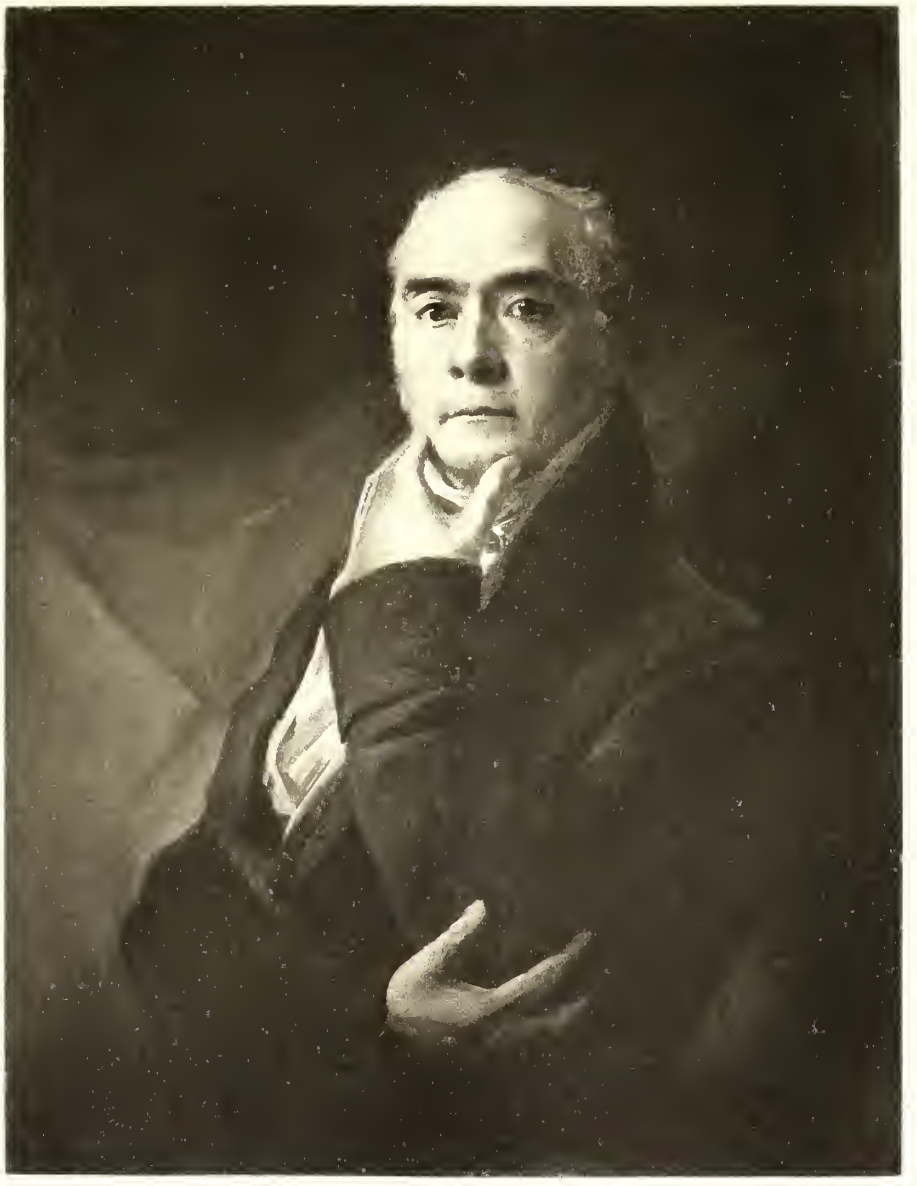
BY ALLAN RAMSAY

Canvas 30″ × 25″, purchased 1907

PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER

BY SIR HENRY RAEBURN, R.A.

Canvas 36″ × 28″, purchased 1905



MRS CAMPBELL OF BALLIMORE

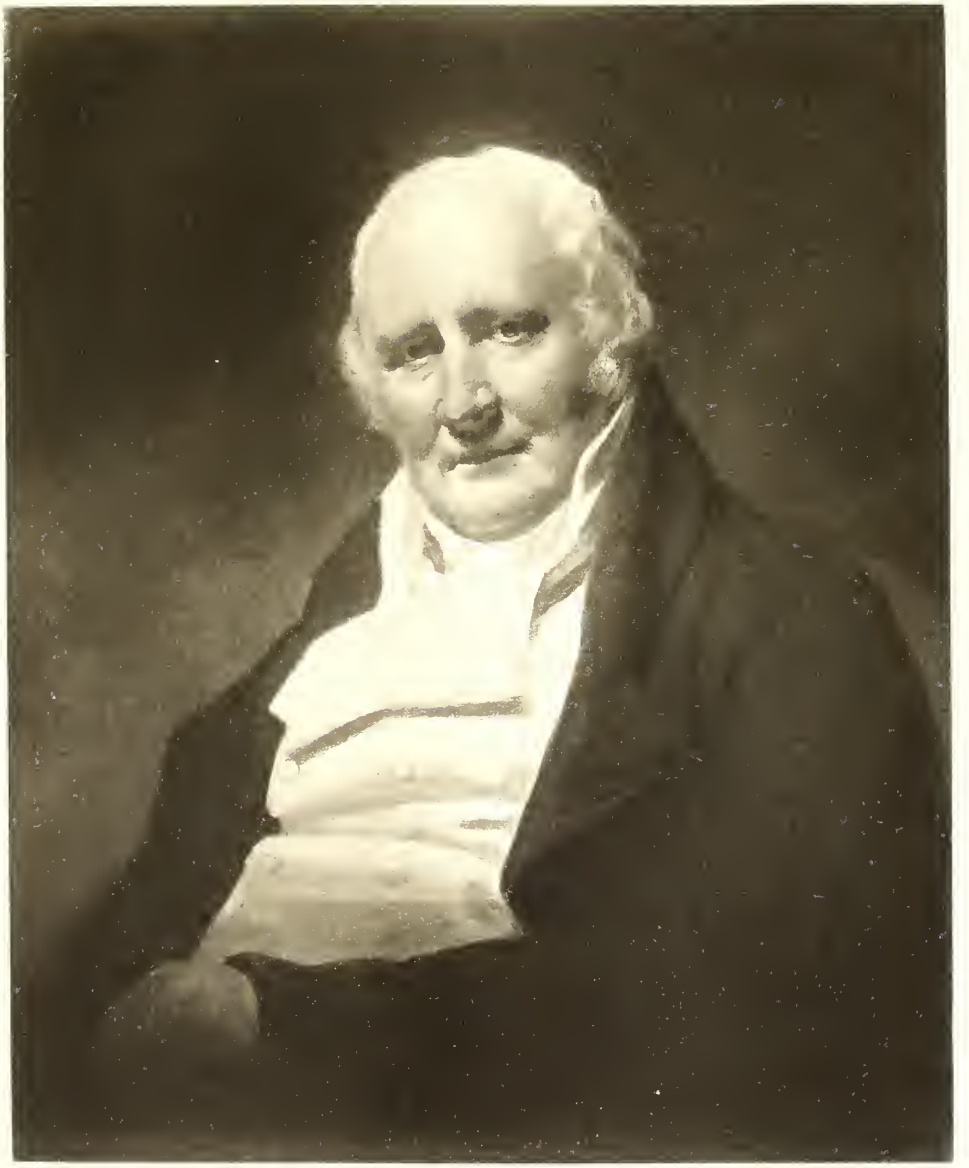
BY SIR HENRY RAEBURN, R.A.

Canvas 50″ × 40″, *bequeathed by Lady Riddell*, 1897

JOHN WAUCHOPE, ESQ., W.S.

BY SIR HENRY RAEBURN, R.A.

Canvas 30″ × 25″, *presented by Rev. H. B. Sands*, 1884



THE GENTLE SHEPHERD

BY SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A., H.R.S.A.

Panel $16\frac{3}{8}'' \times 12\frac{1}{4}''$, *purchased* 1898

THE ARTIST'S MOTHER

BY ANDREW GEDDES, A.R.A.

Canvas 28″ × 24″, *presented by Mrs Geddes*, 1877

THE TRAITOR'S GATE

BY DAVID SCOTT, R.S.A.

Canvas 71″ × 54″, *presented by Mr Robert Carfrae*, 1899

ABERLADY BAY

BY REV. JOHN THOMSON OF DUDDINGSTON

Canvas 36″ × 24″, *bequeathed by Lady Stuart of Allanbank*, 1867

INVERLOCHY CASTLE

BY HORATIO M'CULLOCH, R.S.A.

Canvas 60″ × 36″, presented by the Royal Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts

SOLWAY MOSS—SUNSET

BY WILLIAM SIMSON, R.S.A.

Canvas 36″ × 26″, presented by the Royal Scottish Academy

ANNE PAGE AND SLENDER

BY THOMAS DUNCAN, R.S.A., A.R.A.

Panel $52\frac{3}{4}'' \times 41''$, *presented by the Royal Scottish Academy*

LA GLORIA

BY JOHN PHILLIP, R.A., H.R.S.A.

Canvas 91″ × 62″, *purchased* 1897

STONEHAVEN HARBOUR

BY SIR W. FETTES DOUGLAS, P.R.S.A.

Canvas 48″ × 24″, *purchased* 1909

THE LEGEND

BY G. P. CHALMERS, R.S.A.

Canvas 60″ × 40″, presented by the Royal Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts

A YOUNG BOHEMIAN

BY THOMAS GRAHAM, H.R.S.A.

Canvas 37″ × 27″, *purchased* 1908

THE QUEEN OF THE SWORDS

BY SIR W. Q. ORCHARDSON, R.A., H.R.S.A

Canvas 31½″ × 18½″, *purchased* 1910

THE OLD MILL—SUNSET

BY CECIL GORDON LAWSON

Canvas $53\frac{1}{2}'' \times 41\frac{1}{2}''$, *purchased* 1908

A MOORISH PROCESSION

BY ARTHUR MELVILLE, A.R.S.A.

Paper $31\frac{3}{4}'' \times 23\frac{3}{4}''$, *purchased* 1907

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